

REMARKS

ON

DAVID LEVI'S LETTERS

TO

R. PRIESTLEY.

(Price ONE SHILLING.)

R E M A R K S



DAVID LEITCH

P R I E S T L E Y

(Price one shilling.)

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DAV

DR.

IN AN

By

PRINT

J. BEW,

R E M A R K S

O N

DAVID LEVI'S LETTERS

T O

DR. P R I E S T L E Y,

IN ANSWER TO THOSE HE ADDRESSED

T O T H E

J E W S.

BY A N T I ^{re} S O C I N U S. *peru*

re Anselm Baring

L O N D O N:

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MDCCLXXXVII.

R E M A R K S

P R E F A C E.

A Few words by way of preface,
Dr. P. R. may be of use to inform the
reader, that a little before Calvin
was established in his country,

and form of religion at Geneva, in
1535, Michel Servetus, a Spaniard,



began to publish his works, of the
And-Thomas, which Calvin is

theologically opposed, that Servetus was
condemned to be burnt. Upon this,

Calvin's doctrine, an Italian rose up in
opposition to his doctrine.

It is one of the most remarkable
originals, and the first of the

printed at the University of Geneva, by J. Vallart, 1577.

And sold by
J. Vallart, Geneva, and C. Nicolai, Amsterdam.

his own edition, 1577, of which
acts and discussion without the doctrine

birth

P R E F A C E.

A Few words by way of preface, may be of use to inform the reader, that a little before Calvin established his reformation, doctrine, and form of religion at Geneva, in 1535, Michael Servetus, a Spaniard, began to introduce the heresie of the Anti-Trinitarians, which Calvin so strenuously opposed, that Servetus was condemned to be burnt. Upon this, Lælius Socinus, an Italian, rose up in defence of Servetus and his opinions. He at once exploded the Incarnation, original Sin and divine Grace, revived Photnianism, Pelagianism, and maintained that man was of himself sufficient to be the Author and giver of his own faith, justification, righteousness and salvation without the divine birth,

birth, attonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, who according to him and his followers, was born and lived only for our example, and died in attestation of his doctrine merely as man.

A larger account of Socinus, his abettors and opponents, with their mode of interpreting Scripture, may be seen in Father Simon's Critical History of the Old and New Testament, book iii. chap. 16.

ADVERTISE-

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

“**W**HAT the Author of the following sheets has advanced, is in support of a religion *given by God himself*, (although some Christians *think*, that it is no longer acceptable to God) and that”——

This parenthesis, awkwardly introduced and worded, contains an accusation not evidently true. What Christian ever affirmed, that the religion now professed by Jews is unacceptable to God? Who can presume thus to judge? As to what some Christians may *think*, that is a secret too deep for the eye of Mr. Levi, or Mr. any man, to fathom; nor is the assertion in the first part of

* David Levi begins his Letters to Dr. Priestley, as the Doctor did his to the Jews, with an Advertisement.

of the sentence sufficiently evident, namely, that the religion now professed by Jews *was given by God himself*. No, it was given or rather prescribed from time to time by the Sanhedrim and Rulers of the Synagogue; every one knows that the present Jewish religion is not the Mosaic, but mostly Rabbinical. Religion, answering to the compound nature of man, body and soul, and having for its objects, God and man, is twofold, mental and private, corporeal and public.

Private religion is internal, pure and spiritual, that of the mind, heart and soul, pouring forth itself secretly and silently to God in faith, adoration, prayer and thanksgiving, with hope, trust, dependance and love, under a due sense and acknowledgement of his divine and essential attributes of eternity, omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence, joined with humble imitation and practice of his moral attributes, goodness, justice and mercy, towards man, at all times and in all places, without forms and without ceremonies, as it is said, "Be ye holy, for I am holy—do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God—When thou

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thou prayest, enter into thy closet; and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly."

Public religion is corporeal and external, that of a people united and assembled together, in order openly and audibly to make or confess with the mouth, lips, voice, and proper attitudes of the body, the same or like acknowledgements, as those of private religion, for the sake of example, and of receiving instruction from the appointed Minister, at fixed times, and in certain places, under the direction of prescribed forms and positive institutions.

It is easy for every one to apprehend, that rites and ceremonies are not absolutely necessary to the religion of individuals, but only of society, and that they are not of universal and everlasting obligation like the essentials of religion, founded on the solid basis of divine revelation, pure reason and nature; no, they are temporary only, local and useful as a body for the soul, to render it
visible

visible and preserve it alive, or as the dress and ornament of religion, or as they are commonly called, the means of grace.

The plain rule of forms is, "Let every thing be done decently and in order:" this is the King's daughter, all glorious within, and her clothing of wrought gold, commonly called the Church, decked however not all at once, though always so as capable of attracting the eyes, ears and affections of her lovers.

Though the internal part of the Jews religion may be the Patriarchal and Mosaic, given by God himself, yet it is certain, that the external part is not, excepting circumcision, the observation of the Sabbath, and abstinence from some particular meats, enjoined for health in a particular climate.

What Christian now will presume to think or say, the Jews religion is not acceptable to God, even the external part of it, given by the Rabbies, notwithstanding it be unseemly in our eyes and to our ears? It is the heart which God looks to, not the lips;

lips : as it is said, “ He is a Jew, who is one inwardly.”—Rom. ii. 28. Deut. x. 16. Most Jews as well as too many Christians, are apt to lay more stress upon the form than upon the power of godliness, falsely and superstitiously.

“ The Author (who is a sincere Inquirer after truth.)”——

This parenthesis is merely affirmative ; in which the Author beareth witness of himself, and as such his witness is not true, that is, sufficient in a court of justice. It boasts of great abilities, and presents but one for the important task proposed, and possibly even that one not possessed. “Thou comest to me in such a questionable shape, that I must speak unto thee.” It is not enough, that an Inquirer after truth be sincere ; he must also be able, learned and unprejudiced——

“ Has accepted the invitation in order to convince, or be convinced”—An *invitation* to what ? and to *convince* or be *convinced* of what ? These circumstances the reader is not informed of in the advertisement, which of itself sufficiently declares what are the

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Author's

Author's abilities, as a writer of English, and as a reasoner in the cause of truth.

“ If permitted to proceed in the inquiry.” Who, David, is to hinder thee, if thou wilt be rash and wrong headed to run against posts and stone walls? No one has a right to confine thee, unless guilty of depredations on property as well as upon common sense and truth. Not even the King, nor his Minister will touch thee so long as they endure abuse and insult in diurnal publications, for the sake of peace and to favour the revenue. Were indeed the convocation to sit and act, thy freedom perhaps would be put under some restriction, as well as that of thy fellow-traveller, with whom you quarrel continually by the way, in quest of some truths never called in question, and in the assertion of some falsehoods unknown to our forefathers more than five thousand years past, and which certainly can be of no service to their children, by rendering us wiser, better, and happier. Both of you then are *permitted* to proceed in your inquiries, safely from any other correction than perhaps that of a pen, not near so effectual as a *Stylus*.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTORY LETTER.

“ THE perusal of your letters hath afforded me much satisfaction to find so able a divine and philosopher acknowledge the unity of God,” p. 1.

Surely no one need be an able divine or philosopher to own the unity of God. What Turk, Jew, Pope or Protestant ever denied the unity of God? Nay the very heathen poets and philosophers made Jupiter to be *omnibus idem*, the one supreme, in whom the plurality centered; and Paul hath assured us, that though for the present all power in heaven and earth is given up to the Son, yet there will come a grand period or revolution, when the Son himself shall be subject to the Father, and God, that is, Jehovah, be all in all, agreeably to what Moses declares, “ Our Elohim is one Jehovah;” not our Elohim, observe, is one Elohim, but Elohim, a plural appellative is one Jehovah, a proper, essential name of the singular number.

Where now is the difficulty, or harm of conceiving a Trinity in Unity, natural and spiritual? Fire burns, light warms and illuminates, and the spirit or air cools, refreshes, moderates, reconciles and unites the other two. These though eminently three in condition and interchange, are yet but one in substance. Nothing can be more certain than that it is as impossible to live without the three-fold operation of the spiritual influences, as it is without that of the natural: The natural agents are evident to the outward man, and the spiritual to the inward.

If the Sun of righteousness shew us not the light of his countenance, and rise upon us with healing in his wings, we shall be terrified with darkness, or consumed with fire: Exod. x. 21, Deut. v. 25. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear and be saved; if he be deaf, he must perish, deaf to the voice of Scripture, and blind to the manifestations of nature.

“ The exact time of this accomplishment is not known to any, save the eternal God himself,” p. 2.—

The

The exact time in the accomplishment of every prophecy is doubtless known to God alone, the Giver of it. To tell us this, Mr. Inquirer after truth, is just as new as to tell us, that one and one make two, yet as if it was not sufficiently clear, to illustrate it, you make a quotation from Deut. xxxii. 34. "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasure ? that is, say you, it is a secret from all eyes, as the contents of a letter before the seal is broken : and in nearly the same sense, does the prophet Isaiah express himself, I the Lord will hasten it in his time."

Whether your interpretation of the passage in Deuteronomy be perfectly and entirely right it may be doubted, but not whether the sense of *sealed up*, *broken* and *hastened*, be nearly the same ; these actions are very distant and not at all alike, of course so must be the sense of the words, by which those actions are expressed. Who is this, that darkeneth wisdom, and putteth order into confusion ? It is wearisome and vexatious to criticize

criticize upon bad English, false reasoning, and lying accusations; yet must we with patience and fortitude go on.

“ These prophecies, Sir, are our consolation in this long and dreadful captivity, and have been our support, in enabling us to bear up against the many grievous and miserable persecutions, we have suffered from both *Infidels* and *Christians*. And hence it is demonstrable, that the calculators of the time of the Messiah (and which, they say, must have been elapsed many centuries ago; and therefore exult over us, as if God had totally cast us off, and there was no hope left for Israel) have been most egregiously mistaken.” p. 3.

What prophecies? Those of calamities? Do they afford consolation? The promise in Lev. xxvi. 44. and elsewhere do indeed hold forth abundant grace and consolation, and every Jew will do well to support himself by it under troubles of every kind arising from himself, *Infidels* and *Christians*.

Every

Every reader must be blind indeed, who doth not see, that Infidels and Christians in Italics insinuate, nay more than insinuate, they affirm, Infidels and Christians to be synonymous terms, the *Goim*, alike cruel, unmerciful, inhuman Idolaters. Where is truth here, and in the assertions of the horrid parenthesis, *exult over us—totally cast us off—no hope left for Israel?*—Paul in his Epistle to the Romans positively and openly declares the contrary, and every Christian entertains the strongest faith and hope of a restoration to all Israel, that they shall be gathered one fold under one Shepherd. John x. 16.

Dr. Priestley pitying your sufferings was in some sort for healing your grievances; in his way he presented you balm, wine and oil, which he would pour into your wounds, and bind them up; you with rudeness tear off the bandages, and cast them in his face; and is it to be expected, that while you throw darts and fire brands, we should stand quietly by, and laugh at the sport? You might have refused Dr. Priestley's offers with civility, and perhaps would have been thought wise in so doing,

doing, or at least to have shewed some good breeding.

You say, " Hence it is demonstrable"—

Whence is it demonstrable? Where are the premises, and what is the sequence to this curious syllogism and laboured demonstration? Who, again let it be asked, are the Calculators of the time of the coming of the Messiah? We have heard of Calculators of Comets and Eclipses, but not of the Messiah's advent: Neither have we ever heard, or read of their exultations over you, For shame, Levi! Go to, *abi in crucem!* Cover thy face with a veil, and put on a girdle of fig-leaves *Teana*, which thou knowest signifies, and is a sign and manifestation of, sorrow and contrition of heart, Thou knowest also, that leaves in thy Scriptures are elegantly used for pious and religious professions, and fruit for good works; do thou therefore repent thee truly for thy sins past, and bring forth fruit worthy of repentance for the future; or else thou wilt ere long go to him who is a liar and the father of lies; thou art that fig-tree, which

which was deservedly cursed for having leaves only and no fruit. If thou didst ever sincerely inquire after truth and find it, thou hast here in thy abominable parenthesis and elsewhere lost it in darkness and falsehood.

“ You have invited our nation to an amicable discussion of the evidences of Christianity.”—p. 4.

Here, Mr. sincere Inquirer after truth, you fib again. It doth not appear, that Dr. Priestley, in his letters, invites the Jews to any discussion of the evidences of Christianity, but to a mere and simple acceptance of it.

Livy in his Roman History, has given a very elegant and pleasing description of two armies sitting and looking on the three Horatii combating with the three Curiatii, till at last one of the Horatii surviving the other two, who were killed, conquered the three Curiatii. Had Dr. Priestley invited the Jews to a discussion of the evidences of Christianity, had he thrown down the gauntlet, and they taken it up, how awful and tremendous must have been the fight of

one contending with thousands ! Not only two nations would have stood looking on with eager expectation of the event, but all the nations of Europe, and perhaps too those of Asia, Africa, and America ! However no one can complain of any disappointment ; for Dr. Priestley did not invite the Jews to any discussion, and they as a nation have thought it prudent not to return any answer to the Doctor's letters : only one has taken it into his head, without the consent and advice, of his friends, to accept what was no challenge to him or them.

“ Most of our learned men have declined the invitation ”—

Here he tells some truth, but not the whole ; for he should have said all our learned men have declined the invitation.

“ For two reasons, first, on account of the aversion, which the Elders of our community have towards any of their body entering into any religious disputes—Second, the generality of our learned men are deficient in the proper idiom and phraseology of the

the English language, and consequently are not able to enter the lists against so spirited and elegant a writer."

Here again perhaps he tells some truth very disrespectfully of his brethren, but not the whole and nothing but the truth. For I know myself three Gentlemen, namely, *Messrs. Belisario, Barub and De Paz*, who are more learned, respectable, and more accurate than himself in the idiom and phraseology of the English language.

"These, Sir, are the reasons."

Reasons, of what? He should have said of their declining the invitation, or rather silence with respect to Dr. Priestley's letters.

"As to the first, (reason we must suppose he means) I think it groundless."

Here he is a dogmatical, dictatorial, categorical, audacious Egotist. Samson was not half so valiant, nor even David the King.

King. He slays thousands of Jews, Infidels and Christians, with a single stroke of the weapon that Samson did the Philistines, the jawbone of an ass.

“ The Friars were not able to make the body of Christ in quiet, for the great howlings the Jews made there during their worship.”

It is too true and just a complaint, that the boys and others are too noisy in the Synagogue at this day, especially when they knock Haman on the head ; for which they deserve to be scourged a little, though not to be crucified, as were children, you say, in the days of Popery.

“ We live in an enlightened age, in which the investigation of theological points is accounted laudable ; and so they are, if not carried to a licentious height.”

Are, Sir, your investigations of theological points laudable ? Have you not carried them to a licentious height, when you speak of Christ's miracles, his doctrine and character,

rafter, p. 21, 77, &c. ? You, Dr. Priestley, and others, give me leave to say it, make not a generous and proper use of toleration, but audaciously abuse it, flying in the face of the reformation and revolution ; while you are pleased to compliment it with the title of glorious, for giving you the liberty forsooth of writing whatever, and in what manner, you like : commendation from such mouths comes with an ill-grace.

“ Nothing can be more commendable than a fair and candid inquiry after truth.” p. 7.

Is it a fair and candid inquiry after truth, which leads you to liken yourself with great familiarity and wit to little David, who slays Prideaux the lion, Hutchinson the bear, and Priestley, an uncircumcised Philistine, coming against you with the sword of elegance, the spear of criticism, the shield of sophistry, and you, against him in the name of the Lord of hosts, simple truth ? Though you may think and call this fair and candid truth, yet be assured none of your readers will : every one will
be

be ready to give it some such names as bombast, stuff, and nonsense.

“ But to drop the allegory.”—p. 8.

What allegory? Is the history of David and Goliath an allegory? Or is your personating David and turning Prideaux into a lion, Hutchinson into a bear, and Priestley into a Philistine, the allegory? If it be, there is no reader but will with warmth and indignation say, it is a downright insult upon common sense and good manners.

Permit me, David, for a moment, to take upon me the toil of a brother Lexicographer, and explain to thee the term Allegory, with its alliance to, and shade of difference from, Apologue, Parable, Analogy, Type and Metaphor.

Apologue or Fable is a mere story, or simple narration of things impossible in nature to be real and true, as when trees, birds and beasts talk, reason, give counsel, and exercise government: the first Fable to be found

found in writing is that in the book of Judges, ix. 8.

A Parable is likewise a story or tale of things, though not real, yet possible and probable, after the manner of a comparison or similitude; of which we have a very beautiful instance in 2 Sam. 12. spoken by Nathan to David. Nothing can be more elegant and instructive than Christ's parables, though some of them, to be understood, I humbly apprehend, and interpreted, in a very different manner from what they generally are.

Analogy is that by which real things, spiritual and invisible, are represented or described by sensible objects and corresponding properties, in order to give us some real ideas, though not proper and adequate, of what we could not otherwise conceive, as when it is said, "The heavens declare the glory of God—the invisible things of him are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and God-head."

A Type

A Type is the model, pattern, or delineation of some future event ; thus it is said, the rites, ceremonies and letter of the law is a type, or is typical, of the spiritual dispensation of the Gospel.

Metaphor is the translation or transferring of a single word from its proper signification to another that is not, as when it is said of the clear heavens, they *rejoice*, and of fields standing thick with corn, they *laugh* and *sing*.

An Allegory is a continued metaphor, speaking of one thing, creature, person, or action, and meaning another : a most beautiful allegory is in Psalms lxxx. 8, where the house of Israel or Church, its deliverance out of Egypt, and settlement in the land of Judea, is delineated by a Vine.

“ Thou broughtest a vine out of Egypt ; thou preparedst room for it, madest it take deep root, and it filled the land. The hills were covered with the shadow of it, and the boughs thereof were goodly cedars : She stretched out her boughs unto the sea, and her branches unto the river.”

These

These terms were all of them invented by the Greek Rhetoricians, and are commonly called figures and tropes; which, when used with judgment and taste, give elegance to language. It is this use which eminently distinguishes the style of Scripture from all the compositions of Athens and Rome.

According to this explanation and view of things, had you considered the history of the literal David and Goliath as descriptive of the spiritual, you might with no impropriety have called it a Type or Allegory. Here, as well as in the life of Joseph and Abraham's offering up Isaac, I make no doubt you will drop the Allegory, shut your eyes, turn away your ears, and harden your heart, as foretold by the prophet, "Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish; for I work a work in your days, which ye will in no wise believe, though a man, or the man, declare it unto you."

Your interrogatories, exclamations, banter, and what not, in p. 8, 9, 10, I leave to the care of Dr. Priestley; it is incumbent
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upon him seriously to answer them. You may think them *ingenious*, but he will certainly not accept them as *ingenuous*, that is, decent and becoming a gentleman.

Dr. Priestley has taught you, and you have made great and quick improvement under his curious tuition, to treat him as he treats Mr. Pitt and others his betters, with much familiarity, petulance, and assurance; which indeed is not at all to be wondered at in him, who dares to strip his Master and Saviour of all dignity and honour, mock him, spit upon him, smite him on the head, and then lead him out in shame to crucify him afresh, to the exceeding great grief of all those that love him more than their own souls; even the Centurion, and those that were with him, were they alive to see this, would weep, who said, "Truly this was the son of God."

In your advertisement Dr. Priestley is an eminent Divine and Philosopher; here in p. 8, &c. he is a Judas, a very devil; who, now under full conviction, if not accompanied with true compunction, hath
nothing

nothing else to do, but in a hurry of despair, to cast down more than thirty pieces of scribbling in the Temple, and go hang himself in a Conventicle, or erase what he has said against Jesus Christ with the blunt end of the Stylus, and stab himself with the sharp point of it, trusting to his mercy, who foreseeing what blasphemy he should receive from Jews and Christians, kindly promised, "Whosoever shall speak a word against the son of man, it shall be forgiven him."

Nihil nisi bonum de mortuis dicendum est, hath been held by all as a just sentiment, except by Sterne and by ———.

The time foreseen is now at hand, when it is necessary to put the command in force; "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one," to stand forth in defence of his Lord and his God.

What I have written, I have written.

"We," &c. he is a Judas, a very devil who now under full conviction, it not accompanied with true compunction, is

“ We do not think our religion obligatory upon all mankind, nor the only infallible one to salvation, as every other religion and sect that I have hitherto heard of, esteems itself.” p. 13.

You ought to think and know, that the internal part of your religion, Natural, Mosaic, and Christian, three in dispensations, one and the same in sum and substance, is obligatory upon all your nation and upon all mankind, and that it is the only true and infallible one absolutely necessary to salvation. Not to know and contend for this, is to know and contend only for the husks of religion, such as swine do eat and feed upon, without thriving, and without cleanliness.

One of your nation, a real scholar and a gentleman, says, that though he had profited in the Jews religion above many his equals, yet owned himself devoid of true and pure religion, till he became a Christian.

With

“ With these just and noble sentiments, inculcated into me from my earliest youth, it must be obvious to every impartial and liberal mind I do not aim at the conversion of Christians to the Jewish faith.” p. 14.

Cicero says, *sugimus errorem cum lacte*; whether you sucked in just and noble sentiments, truth and modesty with your mother's milk, is not so obvious to every impartial and liberal mind, as that you now possess neither the one nor the other.

Permit me again to act the part of a Lexicographer, in explaining the word Faith, with more than a shade of difference from Fancy, Imagination, Opinion, Knowledge and Science.

Phantasie, *Phantasma*, or Fancy is scarcely to be considered as any real entity or existence, but a mere vision or working of the brain, an idle conceit, says Littleton, between sleep and waking.

Imagination is something real, as the faculty or power of forming images, or as the image itself represented, or reflected, though not always.

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The faculty or power of imagery, called Imagination, seems to make a part of animal composition for divertissement. To its fabrications we owe much of our pleasure and pain, the diversity of light and shade.

When nature is only pleasant, in a temperate and agreeable mode, the imagination in company with prudence, is cautious; scarcely smiles and talks a little; but when the heart is gay, on the side of folly, it leads to loquacity, bursts into the loud laugh, and is adventurous. When nature is sedate and serious, imagination puts faith and hope upon speculation, and elevates them into enthusiasm. When the heart is thoughtful and anxious, it depresses fear with melancholy and despondency. In short, under either state of hope or fear, pleasure or pain, good or evil, the imagination is apt to deceive by magnifying the object or subject, and making it appear otherwise than it is. Thus, "When the woman saw the tree, that it was good for food, and fit to make one wife," she imagined what it really was not, as she and her husband found upon experience and reflection.

This

This is the vehicle the evil spirit makes use of, for that reason rightly called the prince of the power of the air, through it to convey his false suggestions, working immediately, solely and darkly upon the passions and appetites, in the end with disappointment and vexation; whereas the infusions of the good spirit act upon the heart, will, understanding, reason and judgment, with illumination, conviction and comfort.

The imagination may and ought to have its play, but is not to be trusted in, nor suffered to go without the guidance of reason.

These observations may afford some criterion, how to judge, discern and distinguish between Inspiration and Enthusiasm.

Opinion is a mere supposal, supposition, guess, or assent to something without full evidence and conviction.

Knowledge arises from the evidence of our senses, and Science from manifest demonstration and established documents and principles.

Thus

Thus far, every man can move by himself, within the narrow circle of his own observation upon a few objects, and for a few years; but faith opens a large field, to expatiate in, of things temporal and spiritual, past, present and to come, from before the creation even to the end of it, into duration itself.

Faith cometh not from sight and feeling like knowledge, but from hearing; it is an act of the will, heart and understanding, a firm and steady assent and persuasion of the mind to certain facts, or propositions, on the relation, testimony, or promise of eye witnesses, founded on possibility, and probability, if not absolute and self evident certainty.

Faith is twofold, human and divine.

Human faith is the belief of temporal things only, persons and characters, delivered *viva voce* by word of mouth, pledge, sign, or narrated in profane history; divine faith is the belief of things, persons and characters, spiritual as well as temporal, delivered in sacred history, as it is said, "Faith

“ Faith cometh from hearing, and hearing by the word of God”—and again, “ Faith is the evidence of things not seen.”

Three great objects and fundamental articles of divine faith are the existence of God, the creation of the world, and a future state of rewards and punishments, the rewards to be obtained, and the punishments to be avoided, on certain conditions, by certain ways and means, spoken of and prescribed in the writings of the old and new testament, acknowledged by the general consent of mankind, time out of mind, to be the inspired word of God. Scripture, its plain, express word and common sense, is the only sure rule of faith and practice, not fancy, whim, humour, imaginations, opinions, traditions, wresting of Scripture, and handling the word of God deceitfully, casuistically, cunningly and craftily.

Christians have for almost two thousand years believed in Jesus Christ, as the Messiah promised almost from the foundation of the world, and amply come in his humble character, to save them; and if Jews be-

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lieved

lieved in the same Messiah, as the Mediator and Intercessor between God and man, coming to save them in his triumphant character, the faith and religion of both is then doubtless right, and it is hoped acceptable to God, though perhaps not exactly in all respects and minute circumstances the same. However both are neighbours and brethren in expectation of blessings, and therefore ought to be friends, as much as possible, and love one another, according to the strict injunction of Christ to his disciples, when he was about to take his bodily leave of them, " I say unto you, make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness, that when ye fail, (by a general falling off from faith in me) they (when converted in the final and grand revolution) may receive you, (be one with you) in everlasting habitations," Luke xvi. 9.

For my own part I am glad to embrace this opportunity of declaring, that I ever loved your nation as the receivers of God's gracious promises, and the careful preservers of his precious oracles, and also for the many civilities I have for many years received

ed from several Individuals, persons of politeness, honour and virtue. And now let us hear, what is the Jewish faith, to which you think and say, truly with great propriety, it would be *Knighterrantry* to convert us.

I need not tell you, for you yourself as well as others know and confess, that it consists in going to synagogue, in the observation of certain ceremonies, festivals, days, washings, meats and drinks, and other such like externals, and private opinions, which every considerate man must be ready positively to affirm, constitute neither faith nor religion, that they are of little or no use and importance, and which for that reason a wise man of your nation calls the weak and beggarly elements of the world.

There is one ceremony however which is very neat, decent, and brotherly, that of the Sabbath *Kidush*, and the daily breaking of bread before meals.

The *Kidush* or *Sacrament* is doubtless a very ancient and holy ceremony, so ancient

that I have not been able after all my inquiries to come at its origin, insomuch that I am inclined to think it to be a Mosaic institution at the commencement of the Passover. The Psalmist saith, "I will wash my hands in innocency, receive the cup of salvation, and thus will I go to thine altar."

It is necessary the Christian be told, that the *Kidush* is nearly the harmless ceremony, of much the same *apparatus*, as the sacrament administered in the Church of England, if it be received with an eye to a spiritual deliverance instead of a temporal only, except the circumstances of kneeling, (for the Jews take it standing or sitting) and of the cup or glass before the meal, and its repetition after it, to the best of my remembrance; for I have more than once took the *Kidush* with my late worthy friend *Furtado*, and with another worthy Jew now living.

I am sorry to find, that many, if not most of the Jews as well as Christians, drop this simple ceremony, sit down to meals and rise from them, without the *Berachot*, the blessing

being given by the Master of the house, and are disposed to embrace deism.

The gulf fixed by your forefathers, the High Priest clothed in purple and *fine* linen, and faring sumptuously every day, and by his five brethren the Levites, Saducees, Scribes, Pharisees and Lawyers, is not now so great as heretofore, insomuch that even a grain of Abraham's faith, even the tip of his finger dipped in water (that of baptism) will easily bring you to us, and us to you; nothing can hinder this union and liberty but a slavish and superstitious subjection to your Rabbies.

Entertain no longer the groveling expectations, inculcated by them, in the Zoar and in other Rabinical writings, of your triumphant state under a temporal Messiah in the land of Canaan, there again to shed the blood of bulls and of goats, to eat and drink, feasting on the Leviathan, and having dominion over all the nations, they lying at your feet, and you trampling upon them in full revenge, insolence and tyranny; be assured, let common sense assure you, this

this cannot be the happiness of the new heavens and of the new earth, spoken of by your Prophets, wherein dwelleth righteousness: No, for now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; of which the greatest is charity, because, when faith shall be changed into vision and knowledge, and hope end in possession and enjoyment, charity abideth ever, charity, that is, the love of God, of Jesus Christ, Saints and Angels. Charity is a debt we owe to all, a debt we are to be always paying and never finishing.

Well, David, how is it with you? I see you have been very attentive, and hope not tired. *Quid agitur?* Come, be not affraid; answer stoutly like Thrafo, *statur*. We have had a long and serious conversation together, and it is hoped, not altogether unimproving, on your Advertisement to the reader, and introductory letter to Dr. Priestley. The King in court, demands of you the Foreman of the Jury, to answer upon the verity of the Hebrew Pentateuch, “Is he, the said Dr. Priestley, guilty or not guilty?” “Guilty, my Lord the King, evidently of blasphemy, in the eyes of com-

mon

mon sense and common ears, and in the literal meaning of words in the act of William the third; which he himself aware of and avowing, threatens your Majesty, the Minister and both houses of Parliament with I know not what, if *it* and the Test act be not repealed.

He says, “the Church of Rome and England hath held more than nonsensical doctrines long enough, and that it is time, it should be pulled down—that all the Bishops, particularly the Bishops of Lincoln and Worcester, how clever soever other folks have thought them, and both the Universities once famous, now infamous, are a pack of ignorant, dastardly, dumb dogs, fast asleep, and are not to be awakened but by the stones of Cathedrals and Colleges about their ears. In my opinion he ought immediately to be hanged, for putting the three Estates of the Realm in bodily fear, and even the Lord Chancellor, who is not easily affrighted, is known to be of a generous heart, and to provide for honest men and true, graciously, unsolicited; while he himself growls like an ill natured Cur in

in the manger. For he tells Mr. Pitt, your Majesty's confidential, worthy and universally admired Minister, except by—he will not accept any thing his interest can give him in the Church or State, and will not let you eat your own bread and plain repast in peace and quiet."

"Well, David, I have taken this tremendous matter into serious consideration; and accordingly have issued out by the advice of my Privy Council, a Proclamation against profaneness and blasphemy."

"God bless your Majesty, I hope to see the Proclamation put into execution with a proper spirit and earnest example. For I see plainly the Church and State is in great danger of falling, and I am sure from the accounts I have had of the sufferings our nation have felt in Philadelphia and new England under the Presbyterian dominion, that if Dr. Priestley and his party prevail, we shall be in a more calamitous situation than ever, by being compelled to suck in Ether, the shadow of a substance, and to embrace the doctrine of Socinus, or be knocked on the head for stupidity and stubbornness."

"Upon

Upon the Settlement of Pennsylvania part of our nation opened their shops under a supposition of its being a free country for all religions; but by Pen's Charter the privileges and immunities of the Province being confined to the professors of the religion of Jesus Christ, the Rulers in Philadelphia let loose the populace upon the Jews, who plundered their stores, and expelled them the place; upon which they retired to New York and Rhode Island, where they have Synagogues, and live in peace.

I could communicate to your Majesty, if I might with propriety and permission, an anecdote disclosed to me by means of that correspondence we hold with each other all over the world, of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, a very worthy, benevolent man to my knowledge, for he once gave me ten pounds when I went to him in distress, but not so knowing in the arts of a Sect, as his Predecessor, among which he had been originally bred, how he was unawares drawn into the utteration of some words.

What words? Let us hear.

F

Your

Upon

Your Majesty then must know, there came over from America a couple of tall, lank, ragged fellows, in the capacity and profession of mendicants, belonging to the Presbyterian party, with two others, a Sir James J—— and a Dr. S——. The Archbishop, to whom they were introduced, commiserating their dismal appearance, innocently entered into conversation with them, among other particulars, about the state of the Meeting Houses and of the Church. They informed him, the meetings were in great prosperity, but the steeples tumbling. Upon which the Archbishop, with simplicity of heart, made answer, Alas ! I see in every State and Church there is a period, that our's both are on the decline, and your's rising. This kind of dejection was made known to some friends, and immediately flew to America ; All the Party took courage, and, emboldened here by certain Patriots and Pamphleteers, raised the rebellion, which ended much to the hurt of us, themselves, and ———.

Well, David, if this be truly the state of matters, do you call upon your whole nation, in case of necessity, and even upon the

the nations of Mahomet, to defend the King and Church, for our mutual safety and benefit ; with these documents we dismiss you. Behave as good Jews till it please God to call you to be Christians, and in the mean time I will protect you to the utmost of my power ; and if I had the authority I once had, I would protect your unhappy nation, throughout America, in the peaceful and quiet practice of your religion. “ We thank your Majesty, and shall pray for the welfare of you and your Family, as we have ever done according to the commandment of our, and, I now, with happy conviction, see, of your God.”

In pages 8, 9, you declare, my friend Levi, justly, wisely, and bravely, like a man, “ how Dr. Priestley’s notions can entitle him or any one to the appellation of a Christian, is to me really incomprehensible.”

I must, for my own part, join with you, and ingenuously confess, it is less comprehensible to me than any mystery in the Old and New Testament.

LETTER

LETTER I.

YOU tell Dr. Priestley, p. 16, you agree with him in his charge, “That our present dispersed and calamitous situation is certainly a proof, that we are at this very time under the divine displeasure.”—

I am sorry, methinks, you should agree with him, that you are at this time under the divine displeasure, and in a calamitous situation. The artful Jesuit, like the fly serpent of old, put a question, or position to draw you into an argument, or conversation, and you, like a simpleton, acquiesce in it: the concessions are too much. For consider, if you are under the divine displeasure, you must think, as you say in your advertisement some Christians do, that your religion is not acceptable to God. You might have availed yourself by telling him, “We hope, as I most sincerely do, that we are not at this time under the divine displeasure, nor our religion unacceptable to God, and that though we are indeed dispersed,

perfed, doubtless for wife and good purposes in the designs of Providence, yet it is not true, that we are in a calamitous situation any where at present, except where Presbyterianism prevails ;” and this reflection would have led you to an argument quite the reverse of that in p. 18, in favour of Christianity’s being the peaceable kingdom of the Messiah, as foretold by the Prophets, Isa. xi. 6, and Micah, iv. 3, and that the kingdom of the Messiah is approaching in full accomplishment, wherein the will of God shall be done in earth as it is in heaven.

In answer to Dr. Priestley, p. 20, “ The cause of our present captivity ; and which you impute to our rejecting and persecuting of the prophets, that is, Christ and his Apostles,” you say, “ I freely assert to be ill founded ;” and to prove the assigned cause to be ill founded, you might have humbly and thankfully acknowledged the crucifixion of Christ to make an atonement for the sins of the whole world, and have said, “ We of the present generation do not persecute Christ, his Apostles, or disciples, and that though we are not Christians by
your

your form of baptism and name, yet are we *Messians* (of the like meaning in Hebrew as Christians in Greek) in faith and practice." This would have been a plausible argument at least and ingenious, sufficient to silence him, and put him to shame, if perhaps in all respects not perfectly true; and it would have saved you from entering into those offensive, if not a kind of persecuting, inquiries, observations, assertions, p. 21, 2, 3, and denial of Christ being the second person in the Trinity, (the very thing the crafty, naked Serpent wanted to draw you into, *naked* because unclothed with one good quality,) a prophet and a real teacher. You had no business with the scholastic distinction of second person, in the Trinity, nor do I know that I have, for it exists not in the Bible; however, that apart, and to those titles of prophet and teacher.

Common and allowed sense must lead you to retract your denial of Christ's being a prophet, even if he be only a teacher; for you know, that *Nabia* is not only one, who foretells events, but also an orator, one who preaches, teaches, explains, and exhorts

exhorts to the practice of, moral and divine truths; all which Christ did in a very superior manner, as his hearers with surprize and rapturous exclamations confessed, when they cried out, "No man ever spake like this man;" and again, "He spake with power, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees." In Luke i. 67, Zacharias is said to prophecy; and in v. 76, John Baptist is called a prophet, though neither of them foretold any future event, and were both of them only preachers; very ingenious indeed and forcible.

Most of Christ's discourses are commentaries on Moses and the Prophets, with reprehensions, corrections, and improvements of sayings, doctrines, and traditions uttered by *αρχαίους* Mat. v. 21. those of old time, not referring to Moses assuredly, *meo periculo affirmo*; but to those Elders, Rulers and Rabbies, whom you call wise men, who lived during the Babylonish captivity, and in the period before the coming of Christ: But Christ proved himself a prophet in the sense of foretelling future events, in many instances, as when he preadmonished
Peter

Peter of his denial and conversion, and the Apostles concerning his death, and the manner he should die, also predicting the destruction of the Temple, and termination of the Jewish polity, more circumstantially than either Moses, Deut. xxviii. 40, and Dan. ix. 24, with this observation, "I tell you before hand, that when it is come to pass ye may believe that I am he," the Messiah. All these things are come to pass, and others are fulfilling: let us then repent and believe the Gospel.

Some of his parables also, I humbly conceive, and could prove, perhaps to general satisfaction, were it thought necessary or useful, are prophetical, and not merely moral.

You say, p. 22, "Whether Christ healed all manner of sickness, and all manner of diseases by art, deception, supernatural power, or something like a spiritual mountebank, is not my business at present to inquire;" and you would insinuate, "nor to believe." What a profound master's feet have you been sitting at, and what an apt scholar!

scholar! If neither you nor your master, whose heart you should be better acquainted with than I pretend to, and of whom you say, in p. 31, “that he is a complete deist, under the most Jesuitical argument,”—will believe the history of the New Testament, it is impossible for me, or perhaps any man to force you, by proving its truth with any demonstration. Matters of fact are probable only, depending upon the credibility of the Relators, prophecy excepted, which is a kind of demonstration. On this head, therefore, I will only put you both in mind, what those who were eye witnesses of his miracles said, “He hath done all things well; he maketh both the deaf to hear, the dumb to speak, the blind to see, and the lame to walk,” and let the meek Jesus himself ask you, “For which of those good works do you stone me? It is not likely that so many should approve of what he said and did, and all be deceived.

“If we compare Jesus with the rest of the prophets, who succeeded Moses, from Joshua to Malachi, we shall find such a manifest contradiction between him and them, as fully demonstrates, that both parties

ties could not be the messengers of God, as God never contradicts himself."

Patience heavens and common sense! *Quid audio, quid monstri lego et video!* Now then for proof of the contradiction.

"For Moses says, in Deut. iv. 2. Ye shall not *add* unto the words which I command you, neither shall ye *diminish* ought from it—but Jesus acted in direct contradiction to the law of Moses; for whereas the law of Moses expressly commands the adulterer and adulterers to be put to death, Levit. xx. 10. Jesus in defiance of this express command *rescues* the adulterers, from the just punishment due to her crime, and that by one of the most extraordinary devices that ever entered into the mind of man, and which had it been pursued by other legislators, would speedily have led to the entire subversion and annihilation of all law and good order." p. 26.

Oh! righteous Judge! in whose hands the *summum jus* would be *summa injuria*. You say *rescued* the adulterers; yes mercifully so
out

out of the hands of cruel accusers, perhaps in combination, certainly designing to ensnare Jesus in a critical case. When you say *rescued*, this implies no *command*, which you was to shew, nor any *contradiction* and opposition to the law of Moses, but a gracious address in a court of equity, where the evidence was not sufficiently clear of all suspicious falsehood and malice in the witnesses.

“ Again, the law of Moses *commands*, when a man doth not like his wife—Deut. xxiv. 6. then let him write her a bill of divorcement,”——p. 27.

No, Mr. Lawyer Levi, a greater block-head at quibbling and falsity than Priddle himself, Moses doth not here *command*, he only permits, *let* him write a bill; accordingly Jesus as a wise and judicious Interpreter says, “ Moses *suffered* you for the hardness of your heart,” and he might have added for the fury, heat and variety of your lust and concupiscence, “ to put away your wives ;” which you Judas like have left out in your quotation of Mark x. 11.

I hope, thou wilt have thy head well combed, even to the quick, for thy ungenerous treatment and the want of urbanity towards the beauty and grace of the creation. Jesus upon all occasions behaved as a complete gentleman to the female sex, and they were reciprocally attentive and polite to him, insomuch that I have often wondered, those four, morose hypocrites, the Scribes, Pharisees and Lawyers, did not accuse him of intrigue, among other things, they laid to his charge, which he knew not.

“ The prophet Jeremiah, xvii. 21, 22. at the exprefs command of God, enforces the due observance of the Sabbath, and in particular, that they bear no burden; but Jesus in direct contradiction to this command of *his father*, ordered the man, who had the infirmity thirty and eight years, (and whom he cured on the Sabbath) *to take up his bed and walk.*”

I need not here take up the cause for the blessed and adorable Jesus, who with condescension excused as it were, this apparent breach of the Sabbath, to the utter confusion

fusion and silence of his adversaries on the occasion ; and Mr. Levi ought not to have brought the matter again into court, setting up the truly Rabbinical plea for sacrifice, that is, the external part of religion, above mercy, the internal and better part. Here David Levi, Shiloh like, demanding the execution of his bond, earnestly and rigorously contends for the letter of the law, which killeth, without the least regard to equity and the spirit of it, which giveth life. This is Rabbinism and superstitious bigotry in the extreme, not humanity and charity, which he so much boasts of, (p. 12.) as the characteristic of himself and people.

Gentle Reader, be sure to take notice in the preceding quotation of *his father* in Italics ; this is done with a truly malignant spirit of blasphemy :

*Monstrum ! horrendum ! informe ! ingens !
cui lumen ademptum !*——

The dirt and brickbats, which he throws so thick and plentifully at Dr. Priestley in p. 29, 30, and 31. I leave for him to pick
up

up and defend himself in his own way: some it may be will stick; how much of it he deserves, let his own feelings teach him to judge. Here we see the old saying verified, "He that first throws stones, must expect to receive them in return."

Whether or no any one can follow David Levi through the tedious Labyrinth from p. 33 to 66. and find his way out again I know not, I am sure I cannot: were I to attempt it, I must go a longer Journey and with more expedition than Alexander flew with four wings of a fowl upon his back, (Dan. vii. 6.) even through the four great monarchies; and what would be more troublesome and plaguing than the whole Journey, I am to be ever putting my sincere Inquirer after truth in the right way: for though he be really blind, yet is he not blind and docile enough to be led, so that I must go behind and be continually stopping, beating and thumping the *asinum pervicacem* to get him forward.

Well, David, let me ask again, How is it with you? If you are not fore with beating
ing

ing I must be free to tell thee I am tired with thwacking all the way of thy long introductory letter; and to give thee, the reader and myself a little respite I must beg leave to put off thy second letter a few days to another hearing.

F I N I S.



Written by the same AUTHOR—and may be had

J. B E W.

The GOOD and RIGHTEOUS KING

A

DISCOURSE on ISAIAH, 32. 1, 2, 3, 4

PRICE 1S.

F I N I S H